

**Town of Merrimac
Public Opinion Survey**

The Town of Merrimac is in the process of updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The **purpose of the Comprehensive Plan** is to:

- Help guide the **pace, type, and appearance of growth and development** over the next 20 years.
- Guide policies for land use, farmland preservation, transportation, environmental protection, and economic development.
- Suggest strategies to make the Town's visions become a reality.

In January 2004, this public opinion survey was sent to all property owners in the Town of Merrimac to gauge public sentiment on a variety of issues that will be addressed in the comprehensive planning process. A total of 800 surveys were mailed to the Town of Merrimac residents and landowners. A total of 249 surveys were returned, resulting in a response rate of over 31%.

1. Do you live in the Town of Merrimac most or all of the year?
A. 58.6% Yes
B. 41.4% No
2. If you answered NO to the above question, approximately how much time do you spend at your property in Merrimac?
A. 15.7% More than six months a year
B. 29.6% 3-6 months per year
C. 34.3% Less than 3 months a year
D. 20.4% Less than one month of the year
3. If you consider your property in the Town of Merrimac your second residence, do you plan on making it your primary residence within 5 years?
A. 34.7% Yes
B. 65.3% No
4. How long has each adult in your household lived in the Town of Merrimac?
A. 8.7% Less than one year
B. 20.8% One to four years
C. 13.7% Five to nine years
D. 32.4% Ten to twenty-four years
E. 24.5% Twenty-five years or more
5. How satisfied are you with the Town of Merrimac as a place to live?
A. 45.6% Very satisfied
B. 43.9% Somewhat satisfied
C. 9.2% Somewhat dissatisfied
D. 1.3% Very dissatisfied
6. Why are you satisfied/ dissatisfied with the Town of Merrimac as a place to live?

See attached.

7. In your opinion, what are the three most important reasons you and/or your family chose the Town of Merrimac as a place to live? **(Respondents marked “1” in the space next to the most important reason, “2” in the space next to the second most important reason, and “3” in the space next to the third most important reason.)** These percentages reflect the overall score.

A. <u>0.0%</u> Community services	J. <u>23.4%</u> Close to Lake Wisconsin
B. <u>1.2%</u> Quality school districts	K. <u>13.0%</u> Rural atmosphere
C. <u>3.1%</u> Near job	L. <u>20.9%</u> Natural beauty of area
D. <u>9.0%</u> Close to recreational opportunities	M. <u>1.5%</u> Low crime rate
E. <u>6.1%</u> Near family or friends	N. <u>1.6%</u> Property tax level
F. <u>2.7%</u> Cost of home	O. <u>1.3%</u> Farming opportunities
G. <u>1.2%</u> Appearance of home	P. <u>3.7%</u> Close to Madison
H. <u>3.3%</u> Appearance of home site	Q. <u>2.5%</u> Other _____
I. <u>5.1%</u> Close to Baraboo Hills	R. <u>0.3%</u> Other _____

8. The Town of Merrimac has an estimated population of 868 people in the year 2000, which is an increase of about 131 people, or 17%, over the past 10 years. In your opinion, what should the pace of development in the Town be over the next 10 years?

A. <u>30.3%</u> Slower pace	C. <u>15.2%</u> Faster pace
B. <u>54.5%</u> About the same pace	

9. Much of the Town of Merrimac has a rural/agricultural character today, including natural lakes and rivers, farmland, outdoor recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat. Development remains fairly limited and is mainly focused along the shore of Lake Wisconsin. How important is it to retain the Town's rural/agricultural character in the future?

A. <u>60.2%</u> Very important	C. <u>9.8%</u> Not very important
B. <u>28.9%</u> Somewhat important	D. <u>1.2%</u> Not at all important

10. Which one of these statements best describes how you want Merrimac to look 20 years from now?

A. <u>24.3%</u> Mostly agricultural and open lands limited	D. <u>3.2%</u> Mostly residential and business, with agriculture
B. <u>51.4%</u> Mix of agricultural, open lands, and residential	E. <u>20.2%</u> Mix of agricultural, business, and residential
C. <u>0.8%</u> Mostly residential, with limited agriculture	

11. What do you feel is the single biggest issue facing Merrimac over the next several years?

See attached. _____

12. The following are several statements that suggest choices about future directions for the Town of Merrimac. **(Respondents checked whether they strongly agreed, somewhat agreed, somewhat disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each statement.)**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A. Merrimac should be a mostly rural Town.	54.3%	32.4%	10.3%	3.0%
B. Merrimac should promote more business development.	21.8%	30.7%	26.5%	21.0%
C. Merrimac should promote the preservation of farmland.	47.7%	38.1%	10.4%	3.8%
D. Town land use policies should be strengthened to better guide growth.	35.9%	41.1%	16.1%	6.9%
E. Most new development should occur adjacent to areas which are already developed.	39.9%	41.6%	13.7%	4.8%
F. The Town should use standards for buildings and signs that make non residential development fit in with the rural community character.	50.6%	37.1%	8.5%	3.8%
G. Land use conflicts between agriculture and residential development are currently a problem in the Town.	20.3%	38.1%	37.1%	4.5%
H. Lake Wisconsin's shoreline should be restricted from further development.	38.0%	30.3%	21.4%	10.3%
I. The re-use of Badger Army Ammunition Plant should focus on preserving the natural character of the landscape.	61.7%	26.3%	8.3%	3.7%
J. The Town should add building construction inspection services for any new development, including building additions. <i>(The Town currently does not conduct inspections on new development.)</i>	37.7%	35.6%	18.0%	8.7%

13. Which one of the following statements best reflects your opinion on the amount of new housing development in the Town?
- A. 17.3% The Town of Merrimac should try to promote a greater amount of new housing development.
 - B. 66.2% The Town of Merrimac should try to limit the amount of new housing development.
 - C. 16.5% The Town of Merrimac should have no role in deciding how much new housing development occurs.
14. What types of new development are appropriate for the Town of Merrimac? **(Respondents could place a check next to all types of new development that they supported.)**
- A. 36.5% Single-family, starter homes
 - B. 73.9% Single-family, mid-size homes
 - C. 41.4% Single-family, large homes
 - D. 25.3% Single-family, attached homes (townhouses or condominiums)
 - E. 15.3% Duplexes
 - F. 8.4% Apartments, 3-4 units per building
 - G. 3.6% Apartments, more than 4 units per building
 - H. 5.2% Mobile homes
 - I. 9.6% “Granny Flats” (conversion of or addition to existing house to make it two residences)
 - J. 34.1% Senior/retirement housing
 - K. 22.9% Seasonal housing
 - L. 12.0% Don’t want to see new housing
 - M. 37.3% Neighborhood shopping & offices (convenience store, bakery, doctor office)
 - N. 31.7% Restaurants, tavern, bar
 - O. 23.3% Home-based businesses
 - P. 38.2% Grocery store
 - Q. 26.9% Recreational and tourism related development (motel, resort, campground)
 - R. 16.5% Businesses related to farming
 - S. 0.4% Mining and quarrying
 - T. 1.6% Other
15. How important is the preservation of the following features for the future of the Town of Merrimac, in your opinion.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important
A. Farmland	55.5%	38.2%	5.0%	1.3%
B. Woodlands	75.8%	22.5%	1.3%	0.4%
C. Wetlands	66.5%	24.0%	6.9%	2.6%
D. Historic sites	68.8%	22.2%	7.3%	1.7%
E. Baraboo Bluffs	80.0%	18.3%	1.3%	0.4%
F. Scenic views	81.8%	16.5%	1.3%	0.4%
G. Water quality of Lake Wisconsin	94.6%	5.0%	0%	0.4%

16. Where is the primary place of work for all adults in your household?

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. <u>1.7%</u> At home in a farm business | I. <u>12.9%</u> Madison |
| B. <u>5.2%</u> At home as a homemaker | J. <u>2.2%</u> Middleton |
| C. <u>5.2%</u> At home in a non-farm business | K. <u>4.0%</u> Elsewhere in Dane County |
| D. <u>1.3%</u> Elsewhere in the Town of Merrimac | L. <u>0.7%</u> Lodi |
| E. <u>5.4%</u> Sauk City | M. <u>0.7%</u> Elsewhere in Columbia County |
| F. <u>5.0%</u> Prairie du Sac | N. <u>1.0%</u> Not working |
| G. <u>9.4%</u> Baraboo | O. <u>28.5%</u> Retired |
| H. <u>1.7%</u> Elsewhere in Sauk County | P. <u>14.9%</u> Other _____ |

17. How many total acres in the Town of Merrimac are owned by the members of your household?

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| A. <u>8.2%</u> None | E. <u>2.9%</u> 35 to 80 acres |
| B. <u>48.0%</u> Less than one acre | F. <u>6.1%</u> 81 to 200 acres |
| C. <u>23.0%</u> One to five acres | G. <u>2.4%</u> More than 200 acres |
| D. <u>9.4%</u> More than 5 acres, but less than 35 acres | |

18. Please share any additional comments you may have.

See attached. _____
